

# Letters to the church in...



# Corinth

**Focus:** 1 Corinthians 7:1-40

## Lesson 7-Marriage and Believers

### ➤ **Intimacy within the Marriage relationship (v.1-5)**

- (v.1)—concerning a specific question that was written to Paul—the instructive answer is useful for all. “...it is good for a man not to touch a woman...” It can be good for a person to remain in single life for a while.
- (v.2-4,5) To avoid immorality, let each man have his own wife, and each wife have her own husband. *They should be always happy and satisfied with each other’s love (see Proverbs 5:18,19; You can read more about this marriage relation in “Song of Solomon”; a.k.a. “Song of Songs” or “Canticles”).* **Spouses should not withhold marital affection from each other, but should keep a loving and intimate relationship between themselves. With “consent for a time” marriage partners may withhold their physical relations, “but come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your lack of self control...” (v.5).**—Keeping regular relations between husband and wife are important.
- (v.5) An excessive practice of the marital relationship may compete with our spirituality and devotion to God. We must keep time for prayer, Bible reading, and spiritual focus. Remember, “Every man who strives for the mastery is **temperate** [self-controlled and disciplined] **in all things...**” (1 Cor. 9:25). **Make agreements about spiritual focus. Learn to have discipline in all things. Do not stir up or encourage excessive marital desires for one another. Keep respect, love, and discipline among each other. Show self control, and keep your minds and bodies pure.** (both of you belong to God). **God does not approve of degraded, twisted, or excessive practices within the marriage relationship.** Keep pure and be respectful of one another as Creatures made in the “image of God.”
- **Maintain love, trust, and respect for one another.**

### ➤ **Remaining single is not a bad deal, but marry if you feel you need to have the affection of that relationship (v.6-9)**

### ➤ **The condition and responsibility of those who are married (v.10-16)**

- (v.10-11) **The husband and wife are not ever to divorce from each other.** If they did leave each other, the Bible says, Let them “**remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to their...**” spouse. **Jesus only gives one Biblical reason to have a divorce, and then to remarry...that is if your spouse commits adultery** (marital unfaithfulness with another person)(see **Matthew 19:3-12; 5:31,32**). If adultery happens, then, you are permitted biblically to divorce and marry another person (though divorce is not required; you may still forgive your spouse if you desire). **Jesus says, If we marry to a divorced person** (who was not clearly divorced for the reason of adultery), then we are committing the sin of adultery with them. **Therefore, IT IS POSSIBLE for a person to be legally divorced by the laws of the State, but NOT divorced in the eyes of God.** In the Old Testament, a person was permitted to take a divorce and then re-marry if they needed to (Deuteronomy 24:1-5, permitted since the time of Moses), but many people abused that option and committed the sin of adultery and frivolous divorces. **Jesus called people back to God’s original standard** and set the record straight! **ALSO, a Pastor** (since he does the ministry of God) **is not to marry a divorced**

*woman under any circumstances (Leviticus 21:1,6-8; Ezekiel 44:22,23). He was to teach God's word faithfully and cannot be biased!*

- **(v.12-16) In the case where one Spouse becomes a Believer in Jesus Christ, but the other is not a Believer**, Paul counsels the believing Spouse to stay married, if the unbelieving spouse still desires to stay with them. **If the unbeliever decides to leave the believing spouse**, Paul counsels **“a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases”** (v.15) (They are **free to re-marry, but only to another believer**, v.39). If the unbeliever is content to remain with you (a Christian—who is faithful to God), (and you are free to practice your faith in Jesus), then you should not just divorce them, because your Christian influence may lead them and your children to be saved in Jesus! **A Believer to begin with should NEVER marry an unbeliever** (2 Cor. 6:14-18; Deut. 7:3,4).
- **Abide in the state of your calling (v.17-24)**
  - Were you called, already being married to an unbeliever? Try to work things out. Were you called being a Gentile? Don't worry to become Jewish by circumcision.
  - **(v.19) Keeping all of the Ten Commandments has always been very important to true Christians** (See James 2:10-12; John 14:15,21)
  - **(v.23) Don't become a slave to other men.** Keep your loyalties to Jesus Christ as free as you possibly can! Therefore, Christians question twice about becoming a volunteer member of Military service. Don't put yourself into slavery under other men. Keep your loyalties and service to Jesus Christ as free as you can. (forced military service is another matter, but even in that situation, we should do all in our power to remain faithful to the commands and service of Jesus Christ—even if some difficulties arise for us).
- **“Time is short!” so focus your life on the matters of Christ's Kingdom (v.25-31)** Don't get hung up and derailed by the cares and concerns of this sinful world. **Don't just live for the here and now.** (Paul's counsel on singleness here was not to be the norm, but should make all to consider about the value of being single for a reasonable time—Being single allows us many freedoms and conveniences that are not so easy to have in married life with a family). **However, marriage is to be a “blessing”** from the Lord (if rightly entered into) and should never be forbidden to any.
- **Paul reminds us of the value and blessing of serving the Lord “without distraction” (v.32-35)**
- **“If need so require...let them marry...but only in the Lord” (v.36-40)**
  - (v.39) **A husband and wife are bound by the Law of Marriage as long as they both live.** But, if one of them dies, the other is free to re-marry, but only to a faithful Christian. The only other allowable re-marriage cases are if an unbelieving spouse leaves you, or if adultery was committed by the other spouse. (On that note, if a divorce happens for unbiblical reasons, and the other spouse re-marries, then they have committed adultery, and you are free to re-marry to another Christian).
- **If you've committed a sin in this regard (of an unbiblical re-marriage), then know that even then, by God's mercy, you can receive forgiveness from Christ (1 John 1:9).** It would **not be wise** for you to separate from your second marriage. You cannot go back to fix this sin of the past. Such a condition falls under the provision of Moses Law. **It would be a sin** for you to divorce your second spouse, only to make some attempt to re-unite with the first again (Deuteronomy 24:2-4).

*Question (s) for the Heart:*

**Is it your desire to be faithful to the laws of marriage? \_\_\_\_\_** Would you like to know better and to serve faithfully our Creator and Lord Jesus Christ? \_\_\_\_\_